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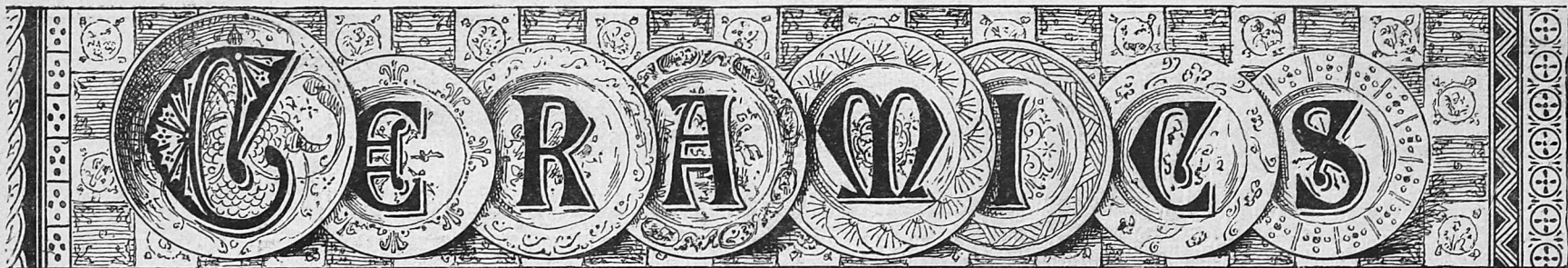
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THE HAMILTON VASES.

II.



PROBABLY no, designs which we have thus far given our amateur china painters have met with such general acceptance as those in our last issue, copied from the Hamilton vases. Several letters have reached us showing the appreciation in

which they are held, and there seems to be a general desire among these correspondents that we shall publish more of the designs. It is with unusual pleasure that we accede to the suggestion, for it would be impossible to place before the student more admirable examples of what is truly beautiful in Greek art.

The figure shown in Plate VI. is the perfection of grace. Dancing among the ancients was a matter of greater importance than with us. Lucian gives a long account of it, and both Plato and Xenophon assert that it was regarded as a matter of great consequence with respect to manners, and even of use in war, and was therefore worthy of the serious attention of legislators. Plutarch also informs us that the Athenians bestowed rewards upon the best dancers, and in the celebration of certain festivals Lycurgus ordered the Lacedæmonian girls to dance naked. And it was rather a common custom for the dancers to fasten their robes round their waist by means of a girdle. This was probably the case in a particular dance called *κορδα* or *Σατυρικη*, in which the actions were not the most decent. The present figure, however, is of a different nature, and she seems to be performing a serious dance, in which elegance of attitude is the principal aim. She is dressed in a very modest manner, and seems to be in the act of letting fall some instrument, of which we are now ignorant both of the name and use. The column near which she is dancing may mean to show that she is in a portico of a theatre, where dances were performed; it may also be a sign of Bacchus, and the dance she is executing may have a relation to some of the festivals in honor of that god and of Ceres.

The design of Plate VII. needs explanation: The Epigoni, having taken the city of Thebes, immediately thought of fulfilling the vow which they had made to Apollo; and determined to make choice, among all the things they found in the city, of the most precious as an offering to the god, nothing appeared to them so worthy as Manto, the beautiful daughter of the prophet Teresias. She was therefore conducted to Delphi, where she remained some time as the priestess, and was known also under the name of Daphne. Ancient mythology reports that some time after she was arrived there the oracle ordered her to go to Colophon, a town in Asia Minor, and to found there a religious establishment similar to that at Delphi. She was also

commanded to take as her associate in this enterprise, and also to marry, the very first man she met in going from the temple. Manto prepared to obey the oracle, but the recollection of the misfortunes of her country made so great an impression upon her that she at last fell a prey to her affliction. The god, whom she had served with the most exemplary piety, wishing to pay an honor to the tears she had shed for the fate of her country, transformed them into a fountain, which was called the fountain of Claros. Its waters were said to be endowed with the power of unfolding futurity. This plate represents Manto as listening with attention and respectful veneration to the oracle which the priestess, who is on the opposite side of the tripod, pronounces.

The sweet design of Plate VIII. is supposed to repre-

for them to wear crowns. Nothing can exceed the beauty of this composition.

There were at Athens certain festivals, held in honor, as some say, of Bacchus, and others of Diana. They were called *canephoria*, and at the celebration of them it was customary either for youths or virgins of a marriageable age to carry baskets, which contained the different things necessary for the sacrifices. These were called *canephoroi*, or *canephoræ*, according to their sex; but it is supposed they were chiefly females. There formerly existed many statues of them; Cicero in his fourth oration against Verres states there were two in bronze made by Paracletes. The outline in Plate IX., which is copied from a painting upon one of the earliest Greek vases, represents one of these ministers, and is very

curious as showing the action and dress of such as were consecrated to the service of the gods. Upon the original vase the figure itself is black, upon a reddish ground.

Whenever a woman was represented sitting upon a stool it was always a mark of dignity among the ancients, and when to this was joined the "patera," or bowl, held near the head, it became a sign of some divinity. By these marks we may know that in Plate X. the painting represents Ceres with two of her initiated priestesses near her; one of them carries the *cystus* with the *præfericulum*. The goddess herself is holding a mirror. In almost all the processions which were instituted in honor of Ceres, some of the mystics, or initiated, walked before her and carried mirrors fastened to their backs, while others attended with ivory combs to put her head-dress in order and attend upon her, as the initiated are seen to do in this plate. Nothing can be more elegant and graceful than the different attitudes and actions of these three figures, while the whole forms a composition at once simple and beautiful.

In concluding our notice of the decorations of the Hamilton vases, some few remarks upon the uses to which the vases themselves were applied may not be out of

place, as it is a question which must strike every one upon seeing a large collection of such venerable relics of art. Astonished at the difference of form between the ancient vases and those which we are accustomed to see, it is natural to inquire the causes of such difference, the use to which the vessels themselves were applied, and why they have been chosen in preference to such as we employ. The elegance of the figures which are drawn up on many of them, the character of simplicity which distinguishes them, and, above all, the great genius of those artists who have invented them, besides the great variety of their forms, must excite a great desire to know every thing that relates to them. In a future article we may recur to the subject. We may then divide the vases, with respect to the uses to which the ancients applied them, into such as were employed in sacred ceremonies, those that were used upon public occasions, and those which were applied to domestic purposes;

for there are very few, perhaps none, of the vases which cannot be classed within one of these three divisions.

KEROS.



PLATE VI. DANCING GIRL.

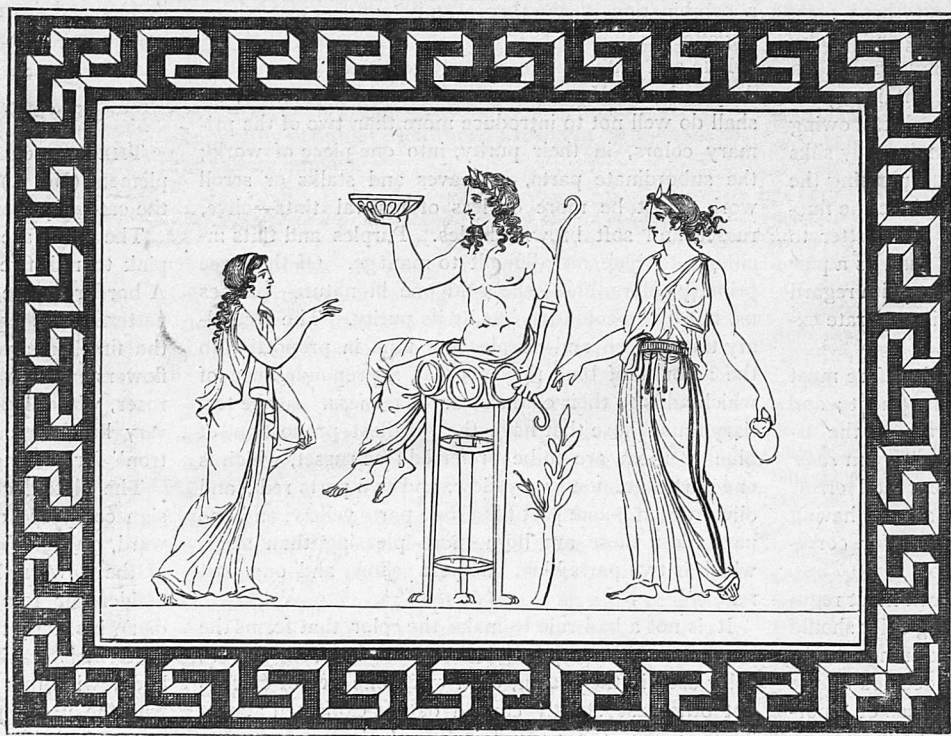


PLATE VII. MANTO LISTENING TO THE ORACLE.

sent some lady being adorned, either for the purpose of going to the theatre, or to assist in some religious ceremony; it is well known that in both it was customary

THE TYRO CHINA-PAINTER.

A FEW friends had acquired some little experience in china-painting—as much as could well be got, considering that the primary object was always fun, and never real, solid, buckle-to labor. Arrived at the stage when they could make the materials behave in some degree as they wished, their grand joy was in tempting some artist of renown and position into their circle, and luxuriating in his difficulties. The paints that spread themselves for the experienced china-daubers with docility and precision went astray under the tyro's hands in blots and bubbles. The pencil-marks which they could direct with firmness refused to be made when the new hand was trying; it was like pencilling on ice. The corrections and retouchings which they could apply at will only resulted for the visitor in dreadful puddles which quite obliterated the work of hours. It was grand to feel that the awkward apprentice, with the profoundly disgusted expression and the beads of exasperation starting on his forehead, was a monarch in his own country, and could make the canvas blush with conscious victory, as well as sell for high prices when he had tormented it enough. One of these unfortunates was a sculptor who could chisel wonders of grace and beauty with his bare thumbs, turning out accurate cameos with never a utensil, and simply filling the wet clay into obedience; when he tried to place one of his exquisite profiles on the plaque, it resembled the circles of grease on a basin of soup. One was a great traveller and painter of Eastern scenes. He tried to make a camel's head, began to sketch, and made nothing of it, plunged desperately "in medias res," and got his dromedary into rough effectiveness; tried to go over it with corrections, and reduced it to a mangy bareness, grew hot, and finally left his patient camel in the guise of the moth-eaten stuffing of a travelling museum. Another was a Munich student, accustomed to work with bits of cloth, like a wood-grainer; he tried his well-known methods, wiped off distressingly clean patches in the painty mess, achieved a portrait that suggested erysipelas and measles, and made a lasting enemy of the acquaintance who had sat to him.

Meanwhile the habitués, less skilful artists than these perspiring experimenters, were going on with celerity and ease, sketching in outlines as fine as the spider's thread, laying tints in flat and even masses, modelling a forehead or a cheek with a pressure of the little finger, and adjusting their "values" with delicacy and vigor. "If I could draw a line as clear as Esau's hairs in that absurd old Dutch tile on the chimney-piece," said one of the victims, "I should at least be able to commence a commencement. Bless me, it's eleven o'clock already! Nay," he continued, staring with animosity at the face of his watch, "if I could imitate this hair-line on the figure that tells me the hour in this bit of Swiss enamel, I should feel that I had done a good evening's work."

But the poor drudge who letters a watch-face can command an accuracy of touch quite impossible to the beginner at china-painting. Not till after considerable experience can a clear and accurate line be traced; and the ceramic artist may be quite a proficient in color, effect, and pictorial quality

before he can lay a line with any thing approaching the levity and ease of the oriental who scribbles artistic nonsense on a ginger-jar, or the old dead Athenian who

What is the secret of the ease with which the poor day laborer can work on porcelain, and how can his cleverness be explained for the benefit of the grand artist who seeks the royal road, and wants to acquire the trick of the trade in a moment? A few words in season may at least tell of some things that it is useful to know are to be done, and of some things that it is useful to know are to be avoided.

Buy the oldest, impurest, fattest turpentine. The less volatile it is the better. The remainder spoonful that has stood in the neglected bottle in the private, unvisited corner of the studio-shelf is potable gold for your purpose. Pour a little into a miniature cup or a clean inkstand; that will last you all the sitting. For a palette and an experiment ground, set before you a fair white breakfast-plate, or a fair white tile, or the broken remnants of what were fair plate and tile before the chamber-maid beggared them on her pulverizing rounds. The professed china-painters use a pane of glass; but they simply repeat their old designs, and do not have to judge

constantly of the effect of color on white; so your white china suits your purpose a great deal better.

While you are setting your things about, hunting for your lead pencil, and preparing some practical joke for the friend who is to paint alongside of you, the preliminary ground can be laid. It is simply a drop or two of the turpentine spilled on the plaque, and wiped over the whole surface with a cloth. Before you have assumed your painting-coat it will be dry, and a little film of the resinous matter will be covering the surface. On this you can sketch, pencil, or paint with ease. To make your first sketch, to adjust your proportions, and establish your distances, you may flourish with a lead pencil. Choose one loaded with all the B's that Faber can imprint on the end—that is to say, a very soft one. It will bite upon the resin-coated china with considerable effect, and you can make an outline thus with some precision and detail; but do not waste time with it, for the real outline as well as all the finish must be done with the brush.

Your La Croix colors are squeezed out upon the plate that serves you for palette. Nothing suits a beginner better than vert-bleu, a delicate turquoise tint. Black is another color that works well, and so is bitume. A beginner may make a decorative sketch by working with bitume in one place and vert-bleu in another, as a bitume figure with a blue cloud effect behind it, a bitume head with blue drapery, and the like.

A fine brush for the painted outline is essential. The Japanese are said to use the edge of a small feather, and to paint rapidly with both hands. Any thing that will make a fine outline in sepia-work or India-ink-work will do. A New York painter used to make these outlining-brushes for his friends, purchasing a fine large sable pencil, and trimming it down to a taper point with affectionate touches of his razor; he got three dollars for every one he thus treated, and they would last a lifetime. For your part, use your favorite outlining-brush from your water-color utensils. It can be cleaned easily with the turpentine, and go back to its water-color service as pure as ever. Now moisten the color on your palette with the brush filled with turpentine, and then

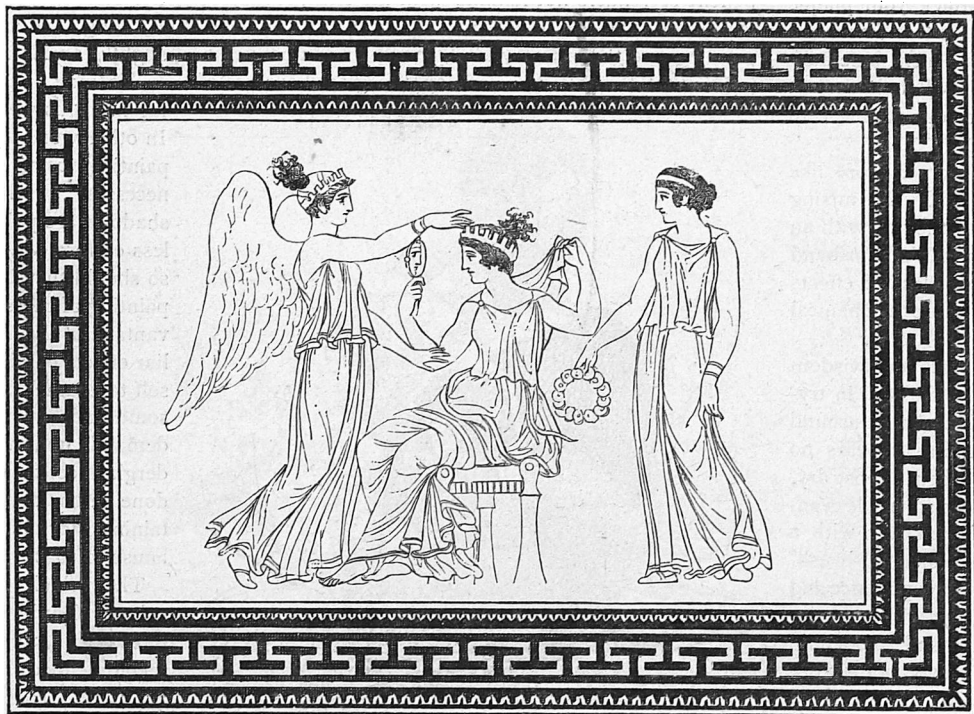


PLATE VIII. A GREEK LADY AT HER TOILETTE.



PLATE IX. A CANEPHORA.



PLATE X. CERES AND PRIESTESSES.

dragged his trailing-legged divinities around the Grecian urn with such preternatural ease and readiness.

make experimental dabs all over the palette; as the paint dries in the brush you can make a finer and finer stroke, and at length a hair-line. Your golden moments are the seconds when the color is in the act of drying out of the brush. Do not attack your plaque till the last expiring breaths of the pine-tree dryad are exhaling from the plumes. You have then some half-minute or minute in which the brush will behave perfectly on the glaze, and you can trace your outline with delicacy and accuracy.

Another device for work of a character more like etching than painting is the steel pen. By mixing the color into an ink, feeding it into the pen with an old brush, and working with the penman's light hand and graceful flourish, you may obtain a class of effects not to be had with the brush, but more mechanical and rigid than they.

To shade, to lay a tint, keep in mind your wisdom of letting the color dry. Your whole difficulty is in trying to work with paints too wet. Experiment around the testing-plate until you perceive the brush bears no surplus of moisture about it. Then, when almost dry, you can lay stroke beside stroke with considerable evenness. Then, immediately, dab the tint all over with a large stiffish brush—something like a shaving-brush. This stipples it with uniformity. Or, with experience and a natural faculty, you can tap the color with the finger, obtaining strange felicities of texture and modelling thereby. Do not at first try to go over your work with deepening touches of color. You only make a blister, the moisture carrying off all your previous work, and cleaning the china in that place. By the latter part of the sitting, however, you can do this, or wait till next day, and the painting will be dry enough to work over.

The coating of turpentine—the soft, soft pencil—the nearly dry color—those are the important hints. Attend to these, and you can easily go on by yourself afterward.

EDWARD STRAHAN.

THE DUCKLING DESIGNS.

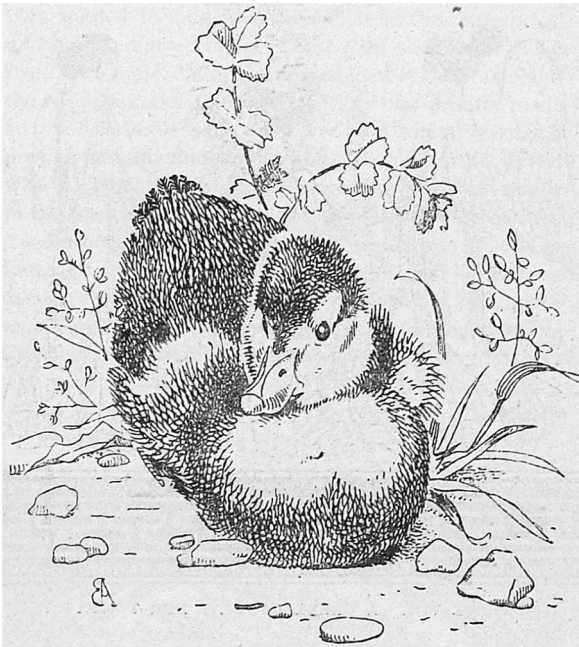
THE four designs we give on these pages are copied from an artistic table service by Adrien Bruneau, the

French ceramic painter, who has made a happy hit in selecting the duckling and its pursuits among his subjects. There is something irresistibly funny in the behavior of a duckling, which is much more original and entertaining than the newly-fledged chicken. We do not know that we could present to the amateur china painter more pleasing subjects. For dish, plaque or tile they are equally appropriate, or would make capital screen decoration. The outlines are easy to draw; the coloring will suggest itself, and when the picture is finished, if it be a faithful copy of the original, it will be a never-failing source of amusement to the possessor. How well contrasted the duckling in repose

and in action are, even to the expression in their eyes! How natural surprise and pain are expressed in the "duckling caught," and how characteristic the triumphant countenance of the two attacking crayfishes appears! How complacent the companion of the "duckling catching" looks upon the feats of its brother! Sketchy as these designs are, they evidently are drawn by the hand of a master, and are well worthy to be copied.

PAINTING UNDER THE GLAZE.

WE have received many requests from amateur pottery painters for information on this subject. For the benefit of readers not familiar with the term, it may be explained that the difference between this mode of painting and the ordinary kind, known as enamel painting, is that the latter is done on the glazed surface of



THE DUCKLING IN REPOSE.

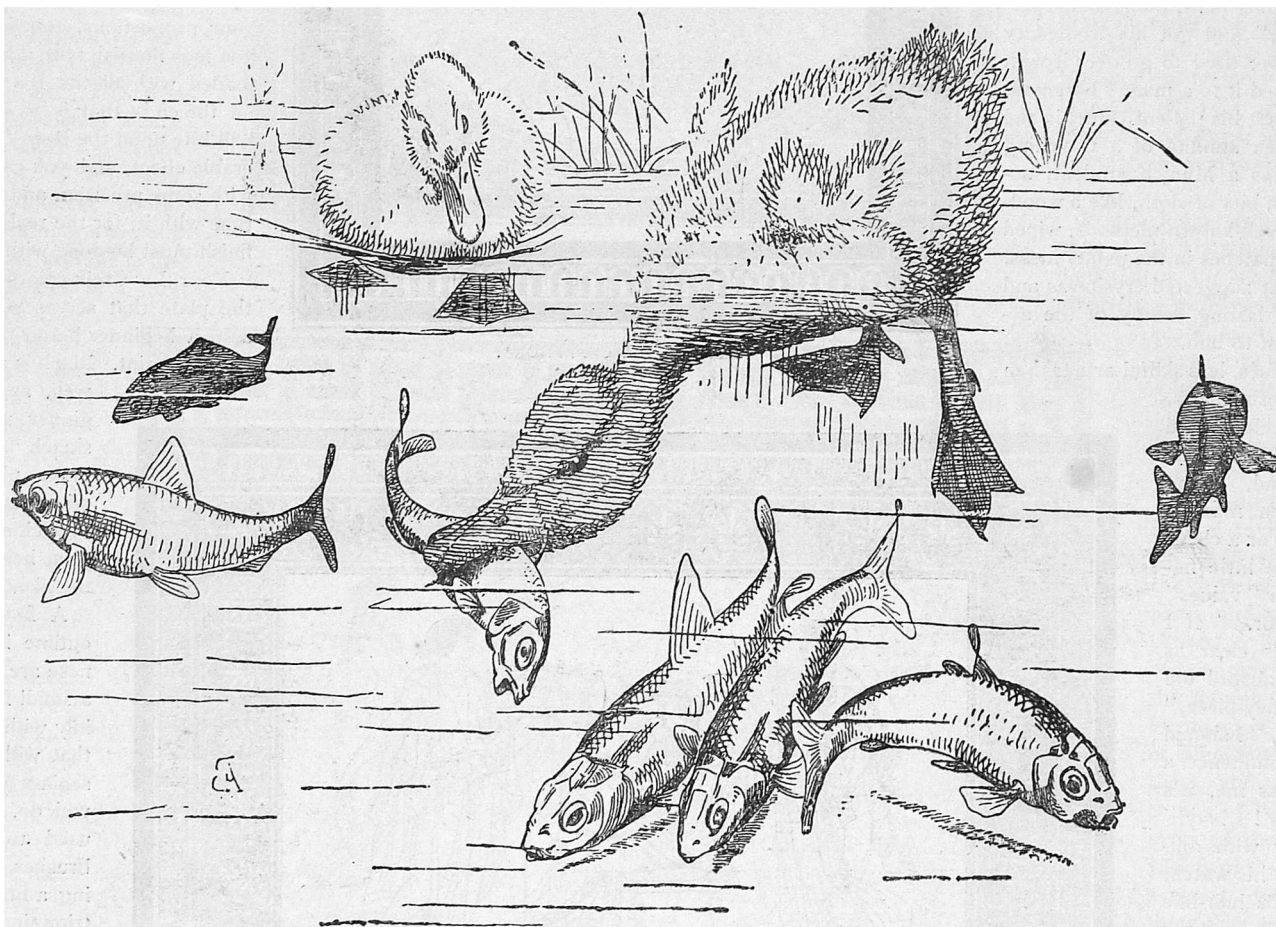
the object, and the former is done on the "biscuit," or dry surface, and the glaze is laid over the colors. For underglaze painted wares the heat of the enamel kiln is not strong enough, and what is called a potter's "gloss-oven" or "glaze-kiln" is used for firing them. Underglaze colors are prepared for this especial purpose so as to stand this extraordinary heat, which is far greater than rose-color or enamel kiln heat. All kinds of pottery in its unglazed state is termed biscuit,

comes of the family of John Hancock, who mixed Wedgwood's bodies and made his colors a hundred and twenty years ago. His thoroughly practical knowledge of his subject makes his instructions particularly valuable, and his chapter on "Underglaze Painting" is so lucid that we give it below, only slightly abridged:

We may distinguish enamel from underglaze painting much as we should water from oil color painting. In other words, just as lights are *left* in water color painting, using only Chinese white where absolutely necessary, so they are in enamel painting; while as shadows are painted in and lights *put on* with more or less of flake-white mixed with the color in oil painting, so should they be with underglaze work. It is the oil painting of the ceramic artist. Unless he takes full advantage of the underglaze process to produce the peculiar effects of oil painting, he may as well confine himself to enamel painting, which is infinitely less troublesome and expensive, and which makes much smaller demands upon the skill of the artist. To resort to underglaze colors to produce only what could as well be done in enamel colors, recalls Charles Lamb's entertaining story of the Chinaman who burned down his house to roast his pig.

The vehicles required are the same as for enamel colors. Far better effects may be produced with colors mixed with turpentine and fat oil than, as has been recommended, if gum water or water and golden syrup are used. Here, however, there is not the same risk by using fat oil, as the colors undergo a process known as "hardening on" before glazing, which burns all the oil out; therefore if the artist desires broad flat washes of color, fat oil may be freely added, while if he is painting in high lights, and desires to give his picture the crispness of an oil painting, the color must be worked more "raw"—i.e., with less fat oil. In practice sometimes, if great depth of tint in a painting is desired, part of it is done in gum water; when, after drying, colors may be used upon it mixed in turpentine and fat oil. If the smooth appearance of enamel painting is contemplated, camel-hair pencils must be used; while, if the artist desires to give the rough surface of an oil painting, fine hog tools are necessary, using camel or sable hair brushes for finishing touches.

The sketching may be done either with a lead pencil or crayon; and care should be taken to prevent the outline being destroyed, as it is somewhat difficult, owing to the roughness of the surface, to take out color and leave it clean. The drawing should be done with great care; the handling firm, free, and bold; the lights impasted with a full pencil and stiff color, producing *actual* relief. This is particularly necessary in foregrounds, and gives a sparkling effect to the picture. In painting underglaze work, particularly on large surfaces, it is always desirable to place the subject before the eye, and in such a position



THE DUCKLING CATCHING. BY ADRIEN BRUNEAU.

from the porous terra-cottas and Lambeth stone ware to the finest creamy white porcelain. The surface is dull, absorbent in proportion to its composition, and its firing has the quality artists call "tooth." Hence biscuit is specially adapted for the painting of large and bold objects. There has been recently imported by Scribner & Welford a guide for amateur pottery painters, by Mr. E. Campbell Hancock, of Worcester, who

that the light may fall from the left hand upon it.

As a rule, the whole of the desired painting should be done before the piece is sent to be fired. The glazing and firing should be looked upon as the varnishing process, but this is by no means compulsory. If very elaborate work is in hand, it may be dried, and then a very thin coating of glaze *pencilled* over it and fired. This will to some extent determine the depth of color

employed, and give a little gloss, and fasten the work, when it may be repainted. If this is done, care must be taken not to paint or impast too thickly the first time. The second painting done, the whole may be glazed and fired. Even after this, and when all the colors are seen, as it were, under a coating of varnish (glaze) the painting need not end; for the artist has it in his power to paint in the detail with enamel color.

This power, however, must be used judiciously, in order not to destroy the depth and brilliancy of the original work, and so reduce the picture to the appearance of an enamel painting. Another point which must not be forgotten is, that the enamel finishing must have separate fire afterwards in the enamel kiln. A little glazing kept upon the enamel color palette, into which the artist should occasionally dip his pencil (after the mode of using magilp), will materially assist the softening down of the enamel colors into the under-glaze work, and will add considerably to the innocent deception. The first painting in underglaze color insures boldness, freedom, and depth, to which the enamel painting adds the delicate finish peculiar to that process.

The writer's idea of a complete ceramic picture is not simply so much underglaze or overglaze painting, but a combination of these, or any other processes which may be discovered, by which the artist is enabled to represent in material forms the ideas of nature which are in his own mind as they are presented to him. Indeed, herein lies the great advantage of the artist-workman or amateur over the mere operative, who earns his daily bread by painting plants at fourpence apiece. The artist is anxious judiciously to step out of the beaten track, and avail himself of any means by which he can produce more beautiful work than he has hitherto done.

The method of mixing underglaze colors is precisely the same as in enamel colors; but special care should be taken thoroughly to grind them with the muller, otherwise a gritty appearance will result, consequent upon the specks of color appearing through the glaze.

Underglaze colors, it cannot be too often repeated, must not be used with, over or under enamel colors, except in accordance with the directions above given, or both will be destroyed.

The following list of underglaze colors, with combinations, will form a sufficient stock for every purpose:

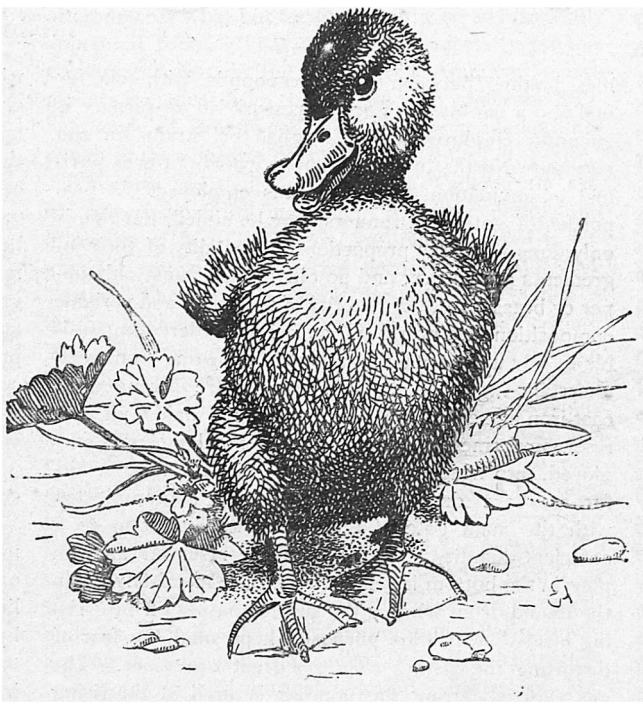
Black.—A very positive and powerful color; best used alone.

Blue (Azure).—A rich, somewhat delicate blue, very useful for skies; will mix well with white, or work on or over it. As, however, there is some little difficulty in assuring one's self that a glaze will be put upon the painted wares which will suit this color, it is always better to use it sparingly, thin washes not being affected so much by an unsuitable glaze.

Blue (Ultramarine).—An exceedingly rich color, similar in character to the above; and the same remarks as to glaze apply also to it—not, however, quite to the same extent. It may be mixed with white also, or the other colors.

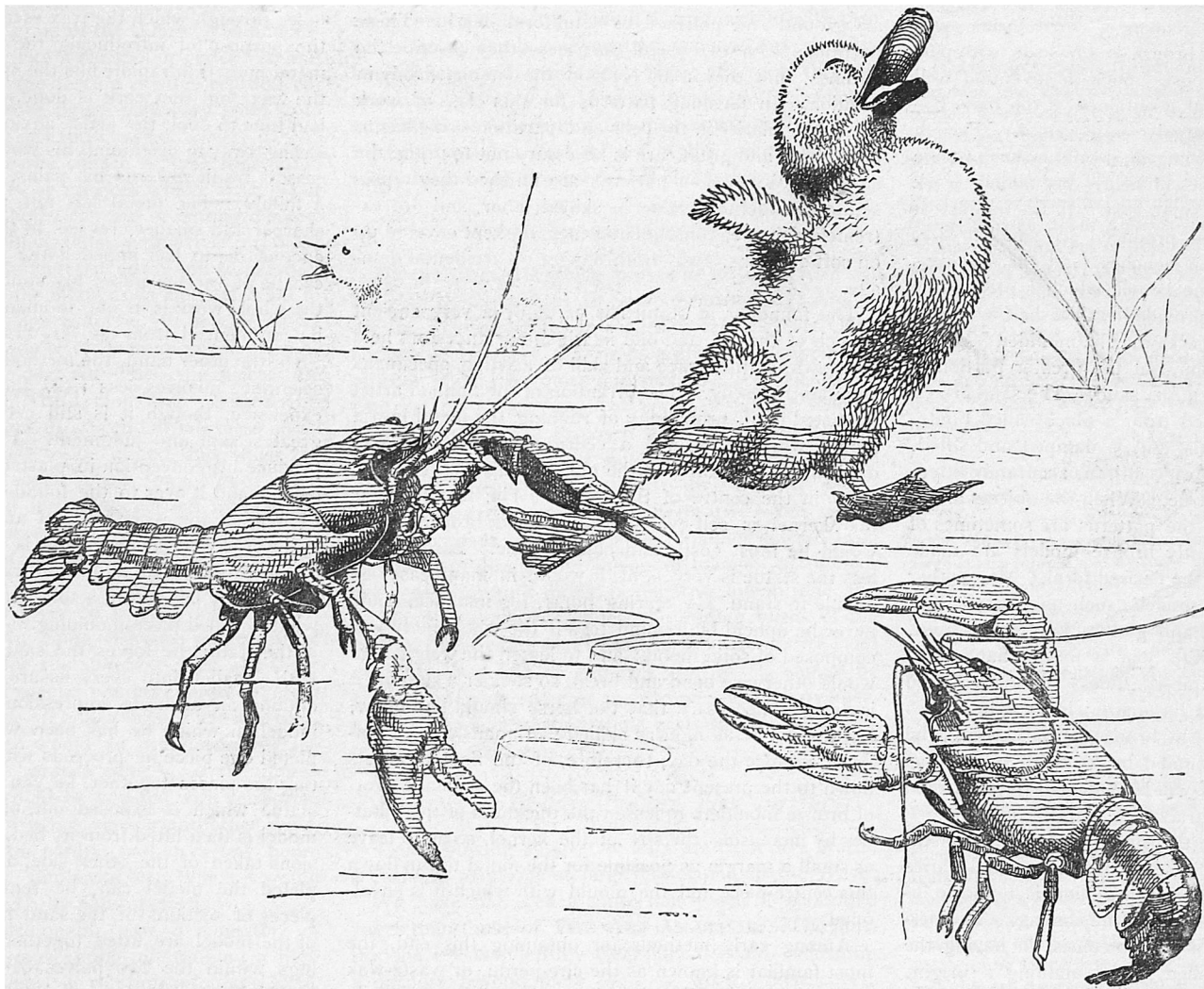
Blue (Mazarine).—A most splendid color of a deep

purple-blue hue. The writer having bestowed great attention upon its manufacture, it is not now so difficult to work as formerly it was. It is the *bleu de roi* of the Sèvres, Chelsea, Derby, and Worcester works. It will mix with the other blues and white, and indeed with most of the underglaze colors.



THE DUCKLING IN ACTION.

Brown (Vandyke).—Similar to Vandyke in enamel color. Paint somewhat strongly. **Chestnut**, a similar color, but rather stronger and redder. **Deep**, a blackish brown. Very rich tints may be made with these in combination, or worked one over the other. With a dash of black over them, a splendid sepia tint results. These colors are admirably adapted for backgrounds.



THE DUCKLING CAUGHT. BY ADRIEN BRUNEAU.

Buff.—A very useful color; requires painting strongly. **Crimson.** This color is the same tint as the strong carmine of enamels, and a most powerful and valuable addition to the underglaze palette.

Dove.—A color very useful for grounds, and delicate tracing also, but perhaps somewhat fickle.

Fawn.—An invaluable color for painting, resembling the delicate tint of the animal.

Green (Rose leaf, No. 1 and No. 2).—Good strong dark greens, very useful for foliage; the latter being somewhat bluer than the former. *Sèvres* is a delicate light green, very useful in landscapes, representing the fresh green of spring, particularly where light renders the young leaves transparent. *Pea* is somewhat similar, but lighter in tint. *Apple* is a brownish or olive-tinted green.

Mauve.—Similar to the mauve of the enamel palette; rather fickle, and depending upon the glaze. Paint strongly.

Orange and Yellow.—May be placed together, and sufficiently describe themselves. Crimson washed over them is improved thereby.

Purple.—A powerful blue-purple; very valuable, and, as it is now made, a reliable color.

White.—Similar in appearance when glazed to white enamel in enamel colors, but it should be borne in mind that it is to the underglaze artist what the *Flake White* is to the oil palette, and may be mixed freely with all the colors except black. It may be impasted strongly for high lights. The colors mixed with it, and put on crisply with hog tools, have all the appearance of an oil painting. The writer has now just had finished an underglaze painting in this style, which cannot be distinguished from a landscape in oils, and which will remain for thousands of years as fresh and perfect as it is at this moment.

CHINA BRONZING.

As the old potters found models in the bronze vases, it was very natural they should desire to imitate not only the forms, but also the metallic lustres. Hence we find the feet and plinths of old Sèvres, Derby, and Worcester vases covered with a "brown lustrous bronze." These bronzes were afterwards introduced into patterns; and now that the Japanese style, with its diversified bronzes and lacs, is so deservedly cultivated, they are in great request to cover modelled representations, lizards, etc., on vases; as well as for the lower reliefs, which may be produced by means of the paste for raised gold, the manipulation of which has already been described. Bronze requires grinding, and otherwise treating exactly as gold, and is so prepared as to fasten to the wares at a rose-color heat. After firing, it appears a mere dry powdery-looking color, and requires the process known as "scouring" to produce its metallic lustre. Scouring is done as follows: A little exceedingly fine silver sand, which has been sifted through a silk lawn, is placed in a saucer or other vessel at the operator's right hand. Then let him take a piece of soft linen

cloth, into which he should put his finger; moistening the cloth, in order that, when touched on the sand, it may pick up a little. Then, holding the piece to be scoured in the left hand, let it be gently rubbed with a circular motion with the sanded cloth; when, if the bronze be properly fired, its metallic lustre will appear.